

**Postsecondary Education Rehabilitation Transition (PERT) Program
FY09 (7/1/2008 – 6/30/2009)**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During FY09, 498 assessments were performed for youth with disabilities through the PERT Program, located on the campus of Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC). The services received breakdown into these categories:

438	Initial Evaluations
1	Youth in Transition
<u>59</u>	Situational Assessments
498	Total Assessments in FY09

As a whole, students served were predominantly white or black, 16-18 years of age. Appropriately 60% were male and 40% were female for both Initial and Situational programs. The youngest students served were 15 and the oldest were 21 years old. The primary disability grouping for youth served was cognitive impairments. English was their primary language. Less than 1% of the students reported American Sign Language (ASL) or Spanish as their primary language. All Situational Assessment students reported English as their primary language.

One hundred and thirty four (134) ancillary evaluations were requested. Ancillaries are additional assessments in a medical area, such as Audiology, Occupational Therapy (OT), Computer Accommodation or Occupational Therapy (OT) Driving Evaluations. The majority of ancillary evaluations in FY09 were for OT Driving Evaluations (109 requested and received – many other referrals were not made due to the cap on services in this area). Physical Therapy (PT) (9 requested and completed) and Occupational Therapy (other service – 6 requested and completed) constituted the next largest number of ancillary evaluations. In Communication Services 7 ancillaries (3 Speech Language and 4 Audiology) were requested. Assistive Technology services also had 3 completed referrals.

Students served through the Initial Evaluation Program were assessed in 25 vocational job families. Non-competitive employment (sheltered employment) recommendations were higher than in past years (12.7%). This increase in non-competitive employment recommendations could be due to implementation of Order of Selection criteria or many other factors. Thirty-five percent (35%) received a recommendation for training. Nineteen percent (19%) received a recommendation for on the job training. Thirty four percent (34%) received a recommendation for trial in training. Supported employment recommendations were twenty-five (25%). The most popular areas explored were Food Service and Automotive.

PERT Program Satisfaction

Program satisfaction information was gathered at the PERT Advisory Council (PAC) meetings. The PERT Advisory Council is an interdisciplinary group of stake holders composed of former PERT students, parents, Field Rehabilitation Services staff and local educational area transition staff from all over the state of Virginia.

Ms. Kristina DeSantis, Fairfax Vocational Rehabilitation Councilor was the PERT Advisory Council Chairperson for FY 09. In partnership with the PERT Director and PERT Field Services Supervisor, Ms. DeSantis has continued to utilize a frame work of a three meeting cycle that has made PAC a revitalized advisory body. The PAC committee now discusses areas that PERT should improve in the first meeting of the year. It formulates solutions to perceived issues in the second meeting of the year. PAC presents issues and solutions in the third meeting of the year to a larger audience at the Transition Forum. PAC monitors progress made by receiving reports from the PERT Director at the beginning of the next cycle relative to each initiative. PAC met October 16th, 2009, January 13th, 2009, and at the Virginia Transition Forum on March 16, 2009.



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Under the leadership of Ms. DeSantis, PAC suggested improvements to: address additional student soft skills areas for PERT to assess/instruct while students are in the PERT programming, identify strategies to decrease no-show rate, and outline a job shadowing programming with PERT pals as part of initial student programming.

Satisfaction information was also gathered through PERT and Center student exit interviews, report implementation meetings held in the student's community, and surveys that accompany the student's summary completion report.

School and Parent/Guardian Satisfaction Surveys

PERT Transition Resource Specialists distributed satisfaction surveys during Report Implementation Meetings for PERT Initial Evaluation students. Of the 438 students who received this service, satisfaction survey responses were received from 193 school personnel (27% response rate) and 90 parents/guardians (20% response rate). Overwhelmingly, responses were positive. These results are summarized below:

School Satisfaction Survey Responses (193 Total Responses)(NR = no response)

1. The PERT experience enabled the student to talk about his/her future goals?

58%	Strongly Agree	37 %	Agree	2%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	1% NR
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2. PERT increased the student's awareness of his/her strengths?

57%	Strongly Agree	37 %	Agree	5%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	1% NR
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3. PERT enabled the student to identify his/her career goals?

41%	Strongly Agree	49 %	Agree	8%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	3% NR
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4. PERT increased the student's confidence and self-esteem?

48%	Strongly Agree	42 %	Agree	5%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	3% NR
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5. PERT allowed the student to explore a variety of leisure and independent living activities?

62%	Strongly Agree	33 %	Agree	2%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	4% NR
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6. The PERT report provided information to assist in the development of the student's transition plan?

72%	Strongly Agree	23 %	Agree	3%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	2% NR
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7. The PERT Report Implementation meeting allowed us time to discuss and plan for the student's future?

76%	Strongly Agree	18 %	Agree	1%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	4% NR
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8. PERT recommendations will be incorporated into the student's IEP?

64%	Strongly Agree	31 %	Agree	3%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	3% NR
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9. PERT increased the students Awareness of academic skills relevant to his/her career goals?

51%	Strongly Agree	40 %	Agree	7%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	1% NR
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Parent/Guardian Satisfaction Survey Responses (90 Total Responses)

1. PERT helped me talk to my child about their future?

53%	Strongly Agree	42 %	Agree	3%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	0% NR
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2. PERT increased my awareness of my child's abilities and strengths?

54%	Strongly Agree	42 %	Agree	3%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	0% NR
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3. PERT helped my child identify his/her career goals?

48%	Strongly Agree	46 %	Agree	3%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	2% NR
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4. PERT increased my child's confidence and self-esteem?

51%	Strongly Agree	44 %	Agree	3%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	0% NR
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5. PERT allowed my child to explore a variety of leisure and independent living activities?

67%	Strongly Agree	32 %	Agree	0%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	1% NR
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6. My child described the PERT assessment process as helpful?

50%	Strongly Agree	43 %	Agree	2%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	4% NR
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7. The PERT written report was received in time for review prior to the PERT Implementation meeting?

66%	Strongly Agree	29 %	Agree	3%	Disagree	2% Strongly Disagree	0% NR
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8. During the PERT Implementation meeting, the PERT report was explained to me?

61%	Strongly Agree	34 %	Agree	2%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	1% NR
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9. The PERT implementation meeting helped me to assist my child in preparing for his/her future?

60%	Strongly Agree	34 %	Agree	1%	Disagree	1% Strongly Disagree	3% NR
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10. I would recommend the PERT program to another family?

76%	Strongly Agree	22 %	Agree	0%	Disagree	0% Strongly Disagree	2% NR
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WWRC Center Satisfaction Survey

There are 251 PERT student responses to the Center satisfaction survey.

1. The staff was helpful?

72%	Completely Agree	22 %	Somewhat Agree
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2. I got what I needed quickly enough?

48%	Completely Agree	37 %	Somewhat Agree
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3. Woodrow Wilson was a safe place?

65%	Completely Agree	23 %	Somewhat Agree
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4. The skills learned at WWRC will help me be successful in life?

62%	Completely Agree	27 %	Somewhat Agree
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5. I was involved in making choices about my program?



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59%	Completely Agree	30 %	Somewhat Agree
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6. I understood what the staff was telling me?

94%	Yes	6%	No
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7. The purpose for my coming to WWRC was achieved?

55%	Completely Agree	31 %	Somewhat Agree
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8. Would you recommend WWRC to others? ?

59%	Completely Agree	18 %	Somewhat Agree
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Former PERT Students Graduating from Woodrow Wilson Center for Employment (WWCE) Training Programs and Former PERT Students Graduating from Life Skills Transition Program (LSTP)

WWCE graduates that successfully completed the training program during FY09 totaled 208 with 65 or 30% being former PERT students.

The Life Skills Transition Program offers a comprehensive approach to teaching individuals the job of daily life and living with others and is based on a living and learning environment, taking advantage of the social aspects of campus life and activities provided on and off campus. LSTP graduates during FY09 totaled 205 with 43 or 20% of these graduates being former PERT students.

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PERT Staffing

The Northern and Southwest PERT Transition Resource Specialists were identified as crucial positions. Funding and administrative support were provided by Field Rehabilitation Services while actual day to day supervision is provided by the PERT Field Services Supervisor.

The third PERT Counselor position remained unfilled for the fiscal year. This resulted in turnover among on-site counselors who had been in the position since FY '07. These positions were filled with limited impacts on service.

The PERT Residential Dormitory full time staff position remained unfilled. Staffing gaps were covered by part-time staff.

PERT Team Training

PERT continues to experience staff turnover in local PERT teams on an annual basis. In FY '09, new PERT team members, which include school personnel and Department of Rehabilitative Services Staff, were provided training in the Southwest region of the Commonwealth and at team training in Abingdon. Regional trainings were also conducted in the Southeast region at Norfolk and in the Northern Region at Manassas. A grant was obtained from the Department of Education for a PERT New Team Training to be conducted at WWRC on November 20th and 21st, 2009. The training was designed to heighten participants understanding of the PERT process and provide exposure to a student's perspective on PERT assessment. Participants sampled Vocational Evaluation Assessment areas, Independent Living Skills and Recreation/Leisure skills assessment activities. New Team members learned more about the processes that need to be completed to send a student to PERT.

Transition Academies

Two Transition Academies were completed in FY'09. The students selected are usually students that would fall outside of PERT admission selection guidelines. These students would have a difficult time functioning in the campus environment in a traditional 10 day PERT program. Support on campus was provided by the local DRS counselor and a school teacher from that LEA. A level one career assessment has been performed in the field to allow the student to target areas of vocational interest. Students selected two potential vocational evaluation areas. During their three days on campus students were exposed to the WWRC intake process, participated in an orientation and campus tour, participated in a teambuilding activity, participated in two independent living assessments, participated in structured recreation activities, developed work behaviors and toured the center training areas.

Nineteen students total were served. In March, nine students from Prince George and Petersburg participated. In June, ten students participated from Frederick County. Plans are in place to expand Prince George and Petersburg to two intakes next fiscal year in December and April. Frederick County will continue to have one intake during the summer. Further expansion does not appear to be feasible using the existing support structure.

Summer Assessment Academy in Fairfax

The Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) Postsecondary Education Rehabilitation Transition (PERT) Summer Assessment Academy occurred on July 14, 15, 16 and 17, 2009. This pilot transition effort between Fairfax schools and the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) served four students and all of the students scheduled for the program attended. The students were referred to the PERT program, and the selection team determined that the students may not be ready to attend WWRC residential setting for a 5-10 day program. The Northern Region PERT Transition Resource Specialist, the WWRC PERT Field Services Supervisor, and the WWRC PERT Evening Counselor traveled to Fairfax to provide services with the Manassas Vocational Evaluator, and a job coach with the school



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system. This community effort provided two days of vocational assessment – interest inventories, situational assessment at the Davis Center and a community work experience at a local Safeway; two days of Independent Living Assessment – developing a budget for real life situations game, cooking, kitchen safety, medication management, hygiene, self-esteem, problem-solving and hygiene assessments; and acted as a screener for the potential of additional services on-site at WWRC.



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